**National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship**

2843. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship to be awarded every year to students who have passed class VIII, as announced in the 2007-08 annual budget;

(b) how many students have been awarded the scholarship during the last year; and

(c) whether Government is planning to increase the number of scholarships?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship Scheme is scheduled to be implemented from the year 2008-09.

(b) No scholarship was awarded during 2007-08.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

**Exemption of NET to M.Phil. and Ph.D. degree holders**

2844. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the exemption from National Eligibility Test (NET) given by UGC to candidates with M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees for teaching in graduate and post graduate courses, respectively, applies to all the universities in the country; and

(b) if so, why some State universities under UGC are not following this for appointing teachers to various colleges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) According to the University Grants Commission (UGC), it has notified the 2nd Amendment Regulation 2006 (on 14.6.2006) that provides for exemption to Ph.D. candidates from the National Eligibility Test (NET). This applies to every university established or incorporated by or under a Central Act or a State Act, and every institution, including a constituent or an affiliated college recognized by the Commission, in consultation with the university concerned under Clause (f) of section 2 of the UGC Act, 1956, as well as every institution 'deemed-to-be-a-university' under Section 3 of the said Act.

**Formation of inter-university centre**

†2845. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under consideration to form inter-university centre to being parity in higher education in all universities and colleges;

(b) if so, the amount sanctioned for this purpose; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.